

Shopping
your values

BY VANESSA HOUK

Little twinkly lights all over the place mean one thing: it’s time to spend money, lots of it, on stuff that we probably don’t need so that we can prove that we care about one another. Sorry for the blatant cynicism, but that’s what you get from me in the middle of November. I could package it a little prettier but there’s no use trying to hide from the truth. Buying stuff is what Americans do best especially during the last six weeks of the year. That “Black” in Black Friday just means that up until late November, retailers are mostly all losing their hats and then when the calendar hits the last Friday in November they hope to be seeing profit again, to be ‘in the black’. Twinkly lights seem to help.

Up until a few years ago it was unheard of for department stores to be open on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Families, no matter their level of dysfunction, all made it a point to get together and sit down and share a meal. Passing a bowl of mashed potatoes to someone you didn’t talk to the rest of the year was just how things were done. Breaking bread together might have even made some of that dysfunction workable. Now, just in these last few years many stores have made it seem normal to stay open 364 days a year, erasing that Norman Rockwell image of families sitting around a packed table together. If Rockwell were alive he’d have to paint families huddled behind a shopping cart frantically pushing their way past other families in search of the latest gadget, but at least he’d have a big audience to sell it to.

Some retailers are shunning this new normal and preserving the tradition of giving their employees the gift of time and perhaps teaching some of the rest of us the value of patience. They’ll close their doors on Thanksgiving and when they reopen on Black Friday there will still be crowds of people waiting in the cold with their credit cards in hand. The crowds will push their way through the doors eager to spend money after their 24 hour break. This is who we are.

Some of us watch this and wonder how we can shop and still practice the values that we prize. Rather than elbowing someone else’s grandma out

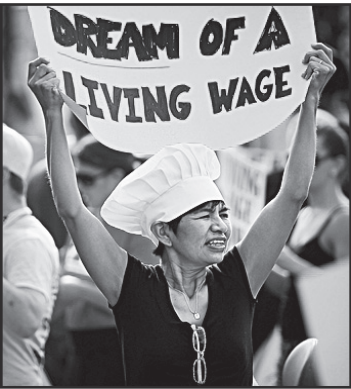
SHOP 9

The spreading
fight for \$15

BY JAMIE PARTRIDGE

Last week, public employees in Portland and the surrounding area became the latest group of Oregon workers to win a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. The workers, members of AFSCME Local 88, won the raise in the union’s new contract with Multnomah County. It is expected to be approved by the Board of Country Commissioners in December. Under the agreement, the pay for the county’s lowest-paid workers will rise to \$15 by July 2016. Local 88’s victory came soon after the news that two other groups of public-sector workers in Portland had won a \$15 wage floor: seasonal park rangers, who organized a union with Laborers Local 483 the year

FIGHT 6



HEATING UP: Christina Condori joined a protest outside a McDonalds restaurant *Photo via Watchbhdog.org*

A pain in the neck
One veterans struggle to obtain proper medical care

BY NINA EGERT

Vietnam veteran, Ted (not his real name), is currently in the process of working with the Jackson County Veterans Administration to right the wrongs of decades of misdiagnosed and mistreated physical pain. His is a jaw-dropping story of amazing resilience and fortitude in the face of improper medical care, a story that stems back to his basic training in the army in 1963, and carries important lessons, both for veterans returning from service, as well as the general taxpayer footing the bill.

Ted and his wife, Bobbie, are snowbirds. They winter in Arizona near where Ted was born, and summer in the Rogue Valley where both were raised. They park their RV in the mountains, at the secret spot where I go to escape the weather on hot or smoky days. It is there, lounging in front of their RV, that Ted reveals his personal history to me.

One of eleven siblings, Ted and his family left Arizona in search of employment, when he was six years old. En route to Alaska, they fell in love with the Rogue Valley, and stayed. While

Ted’s father looked for a job that matched his skills, the rest of the family went to work picking fruit. From that point onward, during his entire childhood, Ted earned income for his family at a variety of tasks.

Ted’s physical woes began at the age of thirteen when, while helping his father clear public land, a chainsaw sliced his leg off at the knee. Miraculously, a doctor in Ashland was able to successfully reattach the limb. A year later, as Ted recuperated in a cast, his father was killed in another work-related accident. In time, Ted regained his ability to walk. However he was not permitted to participate in high school sports. A resentful and rebellious Ted dropped out midway through his senior year of high school, intending to join the army. Despite having a leg injury that disqualified him from sports, seventeen-year-old Ted passed his physical examination, and was inducted into the service. This was just the first of many highly questionable judgments made by military medical personnel on the public dime.

A few weeks later, while in Basic Training at Fort Ord, Ted

received his second serious injury— an accidental blow to the head from a rifle butt, the result of a sparring match between two of his colleagues. Despite complaints of neck and back pain, the doctor took no x-rays at that time. He merely placed Ted on three days of Light Duty, after which Ted returned to his unit to complete his basic training.

Recognizing his innate intelligence, the army tapped Ted to become a combat engineer. He learned to defuse bombs, and to both build and blow-up bridges. However, instead of being assigned to a base in Germany as he had expected, in 1965 Ted was shipped off to the Philippines, then Vietnam.

For four months Ted and his unit of engineers accompanied various transport missions that supplied rations and other goods to outlying units throughout Southeast-Asia. They demolished bridges on routes used by the Viet Cong, and protected convoys by defusing booby traps, mines, and unexploded artillery.

This work came with its obvious dangers. First, a more cautious Ted looked on as his

average Walmart cashiers are paid \$8.48 an hour. Workers also report that their schedules are often inconsistent, varying in the number of hours they get, as well as the shifts they are required to work. This makes family budgeting nearly impossible and limits workers’ ability to go to school or find a second supplemental job.

Employees at more than 2,100 stores nationwide have signed an online petition asking for \$15 per hour and better working conditions.

Last year on Black Friday, the day after the Thanksgiving holiday rallies were held at 1,400 Walmart stores, according to labor group OUR Walmart.

Earlier this month, police

WALMART 9

foolhardy commander callously kicked a makeshift roadside bomb, therein blowing his leg off. A few days later, the truck in which Ted was riding exploded as it passed over a shape charge. Unaware of any injuries at the time, Ted returned to duty without obtaining proper medical attention or documentation. Finally, as he stood on guard duty, a flash from an exploding flare sent Ted reeling backwards into a foxhole. After crawling out, Ted realized he could no longer move his legs.

For the next five weeks Ted lay on a cot in a hospital tent— again without receiving x-rays or proper diagnoses. Within only a couple of days of regaining use of his legs, doctors discharged Ted from the hospital, without providing him with any regulation military gear. An unsympathetic doctor ordered Ted to walk the several miles’ journey to the location where his unit was stationed.

Luckily for Ted, as he haltingly stumbled toward his unit, who should drive by in a jeep but

TED 10

Editorials & Opinion

Dear readers...

Letter from the editor

We’ve been kind of unintentionally quiet lately. After learning more about hip surgery than the average person this summer and helping my sister through that, we thought things would calm down, but that’s just not the kind of life we are in the middle of living. One thing that’s become clear to both of us lately is that all of a sudden we’re the adults that other people, even outside of our kids, depend on.

So I’ve just been doing what needs to get done and helping my sister on a regular basis until I realized one day that I’ve been wearing a hat that I thought I had set aside for awhile-- disability advocate. And while privacy dictates that I can’t say much more than that, I can mention a highlight in that I’m a recent member of the California United Homecare Workers (CUHW). It took all of my energy not to doodle Anne Feeney lyrics on my sign up card that afternoon.

After all these years of standing with local unions and on a couple of strike lines, I never expected to get an opportunity to be a part of a union other than sideline cheerleader, so that’s been an exciting aspect of these new life changes anyway.

Aside from the personal stuff, there’s something else that’s on my mind a lot-- Ferguson and the Grand Jury decision over the shooting of 19 year old Michael Brown, an unarmed black man. In a Reuters interview, Jimmie Matthews, who lived in Ferguson for half a century, said he planned to protest the grand jury’s decision regardless of whether it brings charges.

“Whatever outcome they have, we’re going to be protesting. Either way, the issues are the same,” said Matthews, who is black. “We feel that we are not protected by anyone in the system.”

Regardless of whatever else you believe, can we at least

agree that our basic safety infrastructure, our police departments for goodness sakes, must protect and serve us all? And when people--many, many people feel that the police are not there to protect them, it behooves all of us to change that system so that it works.

There will be planned protests all over the country the day after the verdict is read, including a peaceful protest in Medford that will be held in front of the Jackson County Courthouse on Oakdale Street. Date and time to be announced and you can get updates by liking the Rogue Valley Community Press on Facebook.

We’re planning on publishing another issue this year, looks like it will be mid-December, so if you have events and articles please send them to us. We love hearing from you.

Kindly,
Vanessa and Jason

We get letters...

Call now to stop the bombing

BY KEVIN MARTIN
PEACE ACTION

Please take a few moments and call your Representative and both Senators at (202) 224-3121 and say:

“I am a constituent and I want Congress to fully debate a new authorization (AUMF) that deals with Syria, Iraq and ISIS. And when the vote comes, I want you to vote no.”

Under Article 51 of the UN Charter, a country under attack has the right of self-defense, but that only applies to actual or imminent armed attacks, not potential or possible attacks. The U.S. claims it was thwarting terrorists from the Khorasan Group from a plot

on America. Yet we don’t know the details of this so-called imminent attack. What was the weapon? When were they going to use it, and where?

Pick up the phone and call your Representative and both Senators at (202) 224-3121 and use the script above.

Congress has not voted on a war authorization regarding terrorism since 2001. Things have changed and many members in Congress agree it is time to have a full and fair debate and for Congress to take back its Constitutional authority to declare war.

This debate and vote should happen ASAP.

Buy local • Shop mom and pop

Please consider supporting the efforts of the Rogue Valley Community Press by shopping at our Ebay store at: **the*goblin*cave**.

We offer interesting and unique goods, one of a kind items and we do consignments as well...

Our Ebay store helps keeps RVCP in print and gives us the freedom to do our activist work.

Other ways you can help support the community press by supporting the organizations and advertisers that support us.

We hope you find this

publication useful, engaging and interesting. If you find something is mssing, that is where we need you to step up. We value your contributions and are grateful for the opportunity to publish your works.

Thank you,
Jason and Vanessa

Divestment makes sense

BY LOUISE SHAWKAT

The Ashland City Council at its last meeting voted unanimously in favor of a resolution asking the boards of LGIP and PERS to review and consider divestment from fossil fuels. The origin of this resolution was a grass roots effort by local citizens. Councilors Morris and Lemhouse pointed out that this act alone was not enough, more work is needed to reduce our carbon footprint. Counsilar Marsh reminded all present that clean energy and climate change are goals that will be addressed by the City.

Reasons to divest include: exerting pressure on companies and institutions to change the way they do business, reduction of an investor’s exposure to a collapse of the carbon bubble and providing

investors opportunities to invest in multiple climate solutions and to invest according to their conscience and values.

Going fossil free is socially responsible financing. All generations are responsible for caring and using the Earth. We must not compromise future generations their ability to meet their needs. The policies and choices we make on energy, water, GHG emissions are models of business.

Other communities such as Medford, Talent and Phoenix could achieve a similar result.

What bold steps will we together take to make a difference? Join Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (socan.info) to make your voice heard.

*Send your letters to
editor@rvcommunitypress.com*



Your Social Justice News Resource

The Rogue Valley Community Press (RVCP) is your local resource for social justice news. We don’t pretend to hide our biases: RVCP is a publication for the working class and a platform for marginalized voices in our community. Published monthly, it is available through subscription, and local retail locations.

The opinions expressed in RVCP are those of the authors, and not necessarily the editorial staff or advertisers.

Is your voice missing in RVCP? What’s on your mind? We’re listening! Send us your story ideas, articles, letters to the editor, guest opinions, poetry or artwork for publication. We welcome unsolicited submissions. We especially welcome articles covering local topics and events. Send submissions to editor@rvcommunitypress.com. If there are topics you would like to see covered, you can send ideas and feedback to the same address.

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Will Medford become a Mayors for Peace city?

BY ESTELLE VOELLER

Mayors for Peace is an international network of cities, focussed on banning and eliminating nuclear weapons throughout the world. Because local officials would have to deal with any nuclear catastrophe, by joining together, cities have more leverage at the national and international levels.

Currently 6,374 cities in 160 countries belong to MfP, representing over one billion people. (More information at mayorsforpeace.org)

Momentum for a ban, called a nuclear convention, is growing rapidly around the world. Civil society and non-nuclear weapons states are establishing the moral and legal foundations. 155 governments have signed onto the process, called the Humanitarian Initiative, reframing the nuclear issue from defense/deterrence to catastrophic human and planetary consequences. A third conference will meet December 8-9 in Vienna, Austria (see icanw.org).

On November 20, some Medford residents, assisted by Citizens for Peace & Justice, Occupy Medford and Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom, will be requesting Medford City Council to join MfP. We will be presenting at

the noon City Council meeting. If you are a Medford resident, please attend and stand to show your support when requested. Emails, phone calls, and/or letters to the city councilors (and to Mail Tribune) would be very helpful. If you don’t reside in Medford, please contact friends who are.

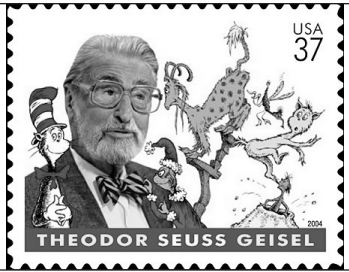
We are at a crossroads now. Our nuclear arsenal is aging and the current military-industrial-congressional-administration budgetary proposal is pushing for modernization of all weapons and delivery systems (land, submarine and air). The Congressional Budget Office reports an additional one TRILLION dollar cost over the next 30 years. Instead, let’s join with the international community to negotiate a nuclear convention that prohibits the development, production, testing, stockpiling, or use of nuclear weapons, and provides for their elimination. We can use that one TRILLION in better ways.

Ashland is one of the 7 Mayors for Peace cities in Oregon, representing 24% of our state’s population. If you reside in a different city and would like to bring this campaign to your officials, contact Estelle (evoeller@charter.net).



Street art in Portland

This issue inspired by:



Doctor Seuss

Did you know that Theodore Geisel’s college buddy Alexander Liang penned a rhyme to teach us how to pronounce Dr Seuss and that you’ve probably been pronouncing it incorrectly all these years?

*“You’re wrong as the deuce/
And you shouldn’t rejoice/
If you’re calling him Seuss/He pronounces it Soice” (or Zoice).”*

We have been there, and done that

OP ED
BY NINA EGERT

Rogue Valley theater aficionados may recall the lyrics of a song from the musical, “The Fantasticks.” In “Never Say No” one parent cautions another that the best way to insure that a child will do something is to forbid them to do so.

Recently, in a television interview, Henry Kissinger stated that if he had known the outcome of the Iraq War—that US military intervention would give rise to an increase in the number of Islamic terrorist groups in the region—he would have never advised us becoming involved in the region. Perhaps Dr. Kissinger never took the time to see the long-running off-Broadway show. If he had, perhaps he might have had clearer foresight.

I am hardly an expert in things

military or political. Yet, as we initially prepared to go to war in Iraq, it was predictable and obvious to me (and I am sure many, many other people) that US military presence in the Middle East would inflame disaffected young people, and foster a rise in terrorist activity, not deflate it. What better way could anyone think of to encourage teenage involvement in ostensibly romantic cause for political resistance than to clamp down on it?

Had Kissinger not noticed, at the time, that inside Israel (a mere couple of fluid borders away from Iraq), Palestinian resistors were committing suicide bombings in public places? Why could he not figure out that kids in Iraq might do the same?

Hello!

How could he not foresee that our choice to occupy Iraq would rally restless teens from across the planet?

Duh!

So now, here we are again, ramping back our activity in the region. Attempting to mop up the mess we made. Bombing troops of disaffected teenagers who heeded the romantic call of anti-heroes (of course, not fully realizing the scope of the actual horrors they would commit.)

Maybe Mr. Obama and his advisors need to take a cue from Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones: ***Sure as the June comes right after May!***

Sure as the night comes right after day!

You can be sure the devil’s to pay

The minute that you say no.

New BottleDrop redemption center offer choices

BY VANESSA HOUK

A new bottle and cans redemption center opened up their doors in Mid-November inside a 7,000 foot warehouse on Stowe Avenue in Medford. In an effort to encourage residents to use the new center, at the beginning of December many Medford area stores will begin to limit the number of recyclable bottles and cans that can be turned in for deposits to 24 cans or bottles per day per person. The new recycling center will offer consumers more choices overall and once folks get used to it, will improve people’s experiences with turning in recyclable bottles and cans.

Currently stores will accept up to 144 cans or bottles a day, per person. At the new center recyclers can choose from a variety of options and can recycle up to 350 cans and bottles a day, per person. Some stores that fall within a 2 mile radius of the BottleDrop center

have opted to encourage their customers to use the center including Safeway on Crater Lake Highway, WinCo Foods, Fred Meyer on Center Drive, Costco and Ray’s Food Place in Central Point. Other grocery stores will continue to accept cans and bottles as usual.

There are three ways to recycle with BottleDrop:

1) Create an account with BottleDrop. Recyclers can walk into the BottleDrop facility and when they create a free account they will be given a redemption card and two free recycle bags which they can fill with recyclable bottles and cans. These bags will have an attached barcode with your information on them so that you can take them home, fill them up and drop them off at the BottleDrop center at your convenience. Once the cans are processed your BottleDrop account will be credited within 48 hours. The redemption card

can be used at the kiosk inside the center or at kiosks inside participating grocery stores and much like an ATM you can choose to cash out or bank your deposits. Additional bags can be purchased for \$2.50 for a roll of 10 and there is a 15 cent per bag processing fee.

2) Choose self service and you can recycle up to 350 cans or bottles per day, on site at the center and you can use the machines to cash out your refund.

3) If you have less than 50 bottles and cans employees at the center will hand count them and you can walk out with a cash refund.

The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative operates the center and the Medford location is the tenth one built in the state. The BottleDrop Redemption Center will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily and is located at 1179 Stowe Avenue in Medford.

When **cranberries** are ripe they bounce like a rubber ball. (You and I both know that you’re going to try it).



11% of the World is left handed.

Humans are born with 300 bones. By the time you are an adult you have 206.

Worried about all of those holiday calories? Grab some celery. It takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it.



Looking forward to watching “Back to the Future” on Thanksgiving Day as per Houk family tradition.





Applause & Hiss



One by one they voted on the resolution. Councilors Morris and Lemhouse supported it reluctantly, arguing more needs to be done, but Councilor Marsh pointed out that the city has recently identified the promotion of clean energy and addressing climate change as critical goals for the coming years. When the dust settled no opposing votes were tallied. The City of Ashland unanimously voted October 21st to ask the Boards of Oregon’s Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) and Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) to review and consider divestment from fossil fuels.



Earth lost 50% of its wildlife in last 40 years 10 years ago that a similar study appeared in Nature indicating that 90% of large fish had been wiped out by industrial fishing over the past 50 years

Burlington, Vermont electrical grid is now 100% removed from fossil fuels In Europe by 2020, the EU hopes that 20 percent of energy will come from renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass. In Munich, authorities have gone one step further, targeting a 100 percent clean electricity supply by 2025, which would make the city a world leader in sustainability.



Two and a half million Americans have served in Iraq and Afghanistan; many of them, more than once. The VA tells us about 20 percent come home with post-traumatic stress disorder, known as PTSD. So, that comes to about 500,000. For some, returning is harder than they imagined. The suicide rate for the Army is up 15 percent over last year. For the Marines its up 28 percent.



Jobs with Justice has compiled data on the U.S. Guestworker program. A state-by-state analysis of which employers use the H-1B, H-2B, and H-2A guestworker programs and where they are located.

www.guestworkerdata.org

In Oregon the top petitioner is Butler Amusements, Inc., and the top occupation is Amusement & Recreation Attendants. Butler Amusement just got hit with a \$100K fine for labor violations in California and Federal lawsuits are going forward alleging the company violates state and federal minimum wage and overtime laws



The number of institutions pledging to divest from fossil fuels more than doubled from 74 to 181 commitments since the beginning of the year. The combined asset size of the 837 institutions and individuals committing to divest amounts to more than \$50 billion.



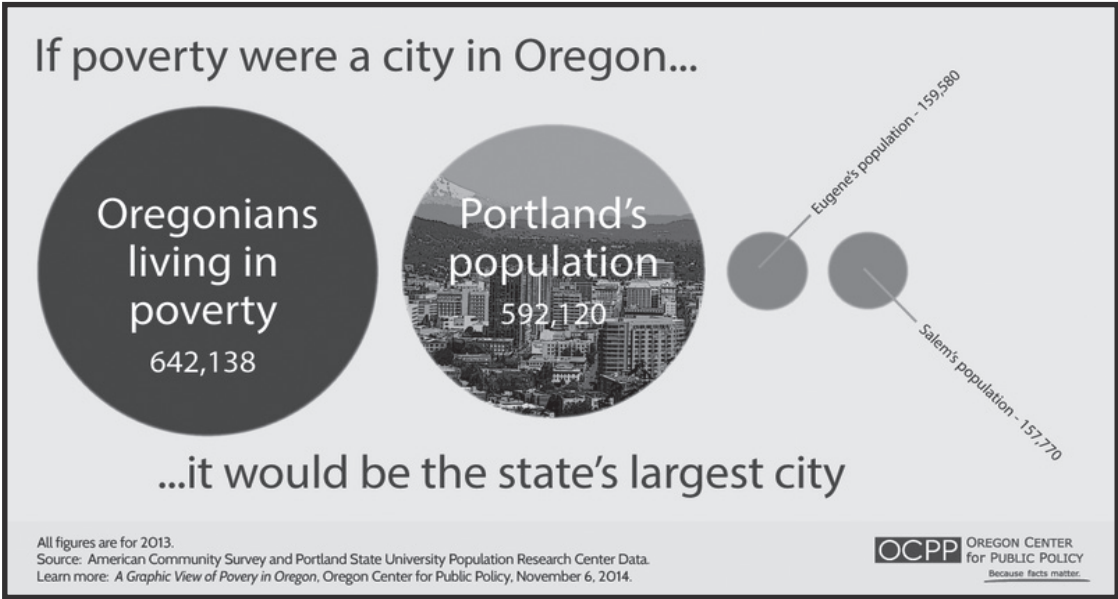
A multidisciplinary engineering team at the University of California, San Diego developed a new nanoparticle-based material for concentrating solar power plants designed to absorb and convert to heat more than 90 percent of the sunlight it captures. The new material can also withstand temperatures greater than 700 degrees Celsius and survive many years outdoors in spite of exposure to air and humidity. Their work, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy’s SunShot program, was published recently in two separate articles in the journal Nano Energy.

Railroad District

When the wind kicks up
and looks for an escape
and the night opens up
to a handful of stars
behind a couple of lazy clouds
I push the window open
just to listen to the friendly
complaining of the old pane
as it creaks and moans over
the shifting of seasons.

The cold air is Van Gogh blue
mixed with drops of raw honey
which I would never know if I
hadn’t been willing to listen
to the secrets of an old house, the
whisperings of past Octobers
the formality of old glass
sliding against wood
that quietly echo with the whistle
of long forgotten trains.

~ Vanessa Houk





SOU not allowing marijuana on campus

BY AARON NILSSON
FOR KTVL.COM

Southern Oregon University is another school not wanting marijuana on its walkways. School leaders said they will stick to what’s outlined in the national drug-free school and campus law. They also said it’s important the university sticks to federal policies and regulations because it depends on government funding.

“Our policy not only covers students on campus, but while they’re at an S.O.U. event as well. If they’re at a university event they could still be subject to policies,” S.O.U. spokesperson, Ryan Brown, said. School leaders said they have already responded to students and student-groups asking if marijuana will be legal on campus July 2015.



Citizens for Peace & Justice

www.cpjmedford.org

CPJ MISSION

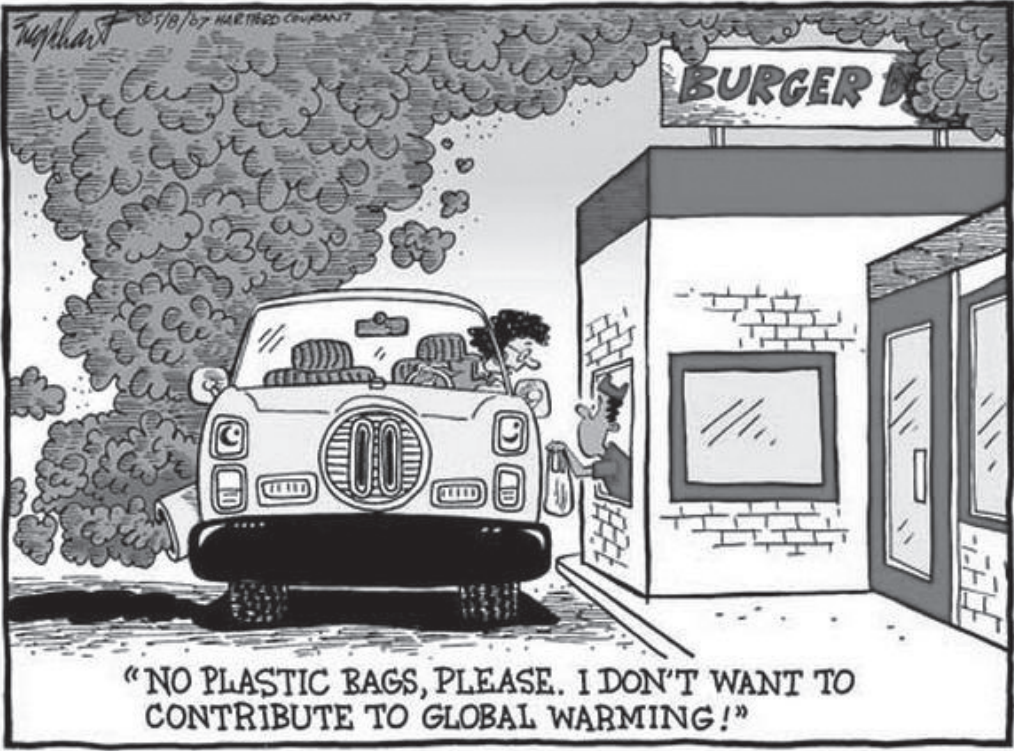
- Embracing peace within ourselves.
- Calling peace into conflicted lives.
- Promoting a just and peaceful community.
- Educating ourselves and others on alternatives to violence.
- Educating ourselves and others on social justice issues.
- Protesting wars, war-like actions, and unjust laws and unjust actions.
- Building a world beyond war through nonviolent means.

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CPJ & Occupy Medford Film Nights:
7 p.m. 2nd Tuesday of each month
Adams Room, Medford Library

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For more information email or call:
Allen Hallmark
hallmark@gmail.com; 541-897-0135



Oregon minimum wage increases not enough for economic security

VIA OREGON CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Oregon’s minimum wage will edge up 15 cents per hour next year to keep up with the rising cost of living. Though welcomed, that increase is not enough to provide families a basic level of economic security, according to the Oregon Center for Public Policy. The new \$9.25 an hour minimum wage announced today by Bureau of Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian, set to take effect on January 1, 2015, means an extra \$26 per month for a full-time worker earning the minimum. The change is the result of a ballot measure enacted by voters in 2002 tying the minimum wage to inflation. “Today’s economic reality — rising income inequality and too many working families living in poverty — speaks to the need to go beyond cost-of-living increases,” said Janet Bauer, a policy analyst with the Center. “While Oregon voters were wise in tying annual adjustments to inflation to make sure that our lowest-paid workers don’t fall further behind, we need a minimum wage increase that makes forward progress.” Even with the annual increase, Oregon’s wage floor will remain below its historical high. In 1968, the federal minimum wage was higher than Oregon’s minimum wage, so the federal wage set the floor. If the minimum wage had kept up with the cost of living since 1968, it would stand at \$10.95 next year, Bauer said. Another indication that the minimum wage is too low is to compare it to the official

definition of poverty, according to Bauer. In 2015 it would take at least a minimum wage of about \$11.70 to lift a family of four with one parent working full-time out of poverty. This figure is based on the Center’s estimate of how much the federal poverty guidelines are likely to increase next year. Yet another way of assessing the minimum wage is to consider the level of income needed to provide families a basic level of economic security. “The official definition of poverty really measures serious economic privation, not basic needs,” Bauer said. A better measure of how much income families need for a modest, yet secure standard of living is the Basic Family Budget Calculator created by Economic Policy Institute. For a two-parent, two-child family living in rural Oregon, it takes a full-time wage of about \$27 an hour to makes end meet, according to the basic budget calculator, which does not include money for savings. The figure is higher for families living in the state’s urban areas. “Oregon’s minimum wage is below what it takes for a family with children to meet their basic needs,” Bauer said. “The time is right for Oregon to substantially lift the wage floor to increase families’ economic security.”

Lawsuit challenges Jac. Co. GMO ban

VIA CAPITOL PRESS

Two southern Oregon farms are asking a court to end Jackson County’s voter-approved ban on genetically modified crops or force the county to pay the farms \$4.2 million. The farmers say that’s the value of the Roundup Ready alfalfa crop they’ll have to destroy if the ban stands. The Medford Mail Tribune reports the lawsuit was filed Tuesday in Jackson County Circuit Court on behalf of Schultz Family Farms LLC and James and Marilyn Frink and their family trust. Lawyers say a coalition of farming, agriculture and biotechnology organizations is assisting the Jackson County farmers.

County voters approved the ban in May. The lawsuit claims that the GMO ban conflicts with state law and will require farmers to destroy crops they have already planted and grown for sale. Roundup Ready alfalfa can withstand the application of glyphosate herbicide. Bruce Schultz estimates he would lose \$2.2 million while the Frinks say they would lose \$2 million. A county spokesman was not immediately reachable late Tuesday for comment. Earlier this month, Oregon voters narrowly rejected a measure that would have required the labeling of genetically modified foods.

Democrats win in Oregon, but will they fight for the working class?

VIA 15NOWPDX

While Democrats around the country are reeling over their various electoral defeats, including the loss of the U.S. Senate to the GOP, in Oregon the Democrats actually won gains and increased the size of their majority in both the State House and Senate while also retaining control of the Governor’s office. Many around the nation are clearly disillusioned with Democrats, and these increased majorities in the Oregon Legislature provide Democrats with a real opportunity to push for and win substantial victories for Oregon’s working class. Back in 2001 the restaurant lobby convinced our state legislature to enact a minimum wage preemption law that

prevents cities and counties from raising the minimum wage. This law is a clear example of legislative pandering to big business. It demonstrates an utter disdain for local democracy and needs to be repealed by Democrats so that a city like Portland, which has higher cost of living than the rest of the state, can make the common sense decision to set their minimum wage at a level more appropriate to their individual community. The minimum wage itself is currently only \$9.10/hr in Oregon. This is not even enough for an individual, let alone a family to survive without being reliant on government assistance programs. The Alliance for a Just Society’s “2013 Job Gap”

study puts a living wage in Oregon, enough for a single individual to pay bills and save for emergencies, at \$15.95/hr. For a family of 3-4 a living wage in Oregon is \$30/hr. Democrats in Oregon are in a clear position to win huge victories for the working class of our state. Democrats need to repeal the minimum wage preemption law that cripples local democracy and local economies. And they need raise Oregon’s minimum wage, but not to \$11, \$12 or even \$13 per hour. The State Legislature needs to raise Oregon’s minimum wage to at least \$15/hr during the 2015 legislative session so that working families can survive and thrive in our state.

FBI Report: Americans less violent than ever, ... except for police

BY JOHN VIBES

According to new FBI statistics released this week, violent crime rates in the US fell over 4% in the past year alone, bringing the amount of violent crimes lower than it has been in nearly 40 years. The statistics showed that there were an estimated 1.16 million violent crimes in the year of 2013, which is the lowest number since 1978, when 1.09 million were recorded. Broken down, the report revealed that manslaughter dropped by 4.4% to 14,196, the lowest rate since 1968, while instances of rape were down 6.3%. Despite the tough economic times, robbery is also down by 2.8% and property crimes were down by 4.1%. The violent crime rate has been steadily declining since 1994, but the prison population has continued to increase over the decades. There are currently over two and a half million people imprisoned in the US, which is by far the largest prison population in the world. However, a study recently published by Pew Charitable Trusts showed that for the first time in decades, the US prison population is actually on a decline. Their research found that the drop in crime that was seen in 2013 actually coincided with a decline in the prison population. According to their

data, the amount of people in the US prison system peaked in 2008, and has since dropped 6%. The study also found that there was a drop in the amount of prisoners in 32 of the 50 states, while imprisonment continued to rise in the other 18 states. California showed the largest drop in crime and imprisonment over the past five years, which is likely connected to lighter drug penalties that have been adopted in recent years. Even among those who are technically “guilty” of breaking some law, a vast majority of prisoners are nonviolent offenders who don’t belong in prison to begin with. According to some statistics, nonviolent offenders make up nearly 70% of the prison population, many of these people are not guilty of any transgression, and they are in fact themselves victims of state violence. While violence among citizens has dropped, violence against citizens carried out by police has been rising sharply. According to the FBI’s annual Uniform Crime Report, 461 felony suspects were shot by police last year, which is the highest number seen in decades. These numbers are likely unreported as well, and only includes felony suspects, so it is possible that this figure is much higher than the study suggests.

Another interesting angle is that in the same time period gun sales soared across the country, which seems to support the idea that more people owning guns actually contributes to making society a safer place. According to a Congressional Research Service report covered by Breitbart News on December 4, 2013, the number of privately owned firearms in America increased from 192 million in 1994 to 310 million in 2009 and has continued to increase every year since. *John Vibes is an author, researcher and investigative journalist who takes a special interest in the counter culture and the drug war.*

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S. Oregonians oppose TPP

BY IVEND HOLDEN

Nearly 600 organizations representing millions of Americans, recently sent a joint letter to Oregon Senate Ron Wyden, who chairs the Senate Finance Committee, to express their steadfast opposition to Fast Track trade authority, and to outline the minimum requirements for a new, democratic and accountable trade policymaking process. Local organizations which signed the letter included Peace House, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN), and Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice (SOJWJ).

Earlier this year, Senator Wyden announced he was working on new “Smart Track” legislation to replace the expired Fast Track process that allows harmful trade agreements like the TransPacific Partnership (TPP) to be rushed through Congress, while circumventing ordinary review, amendment and debate procedures.

The letter included Citizens Trade Campaign (CTC) members such as the Sierra Club, Communications Workers of America, the Teamsters and Public Citizen, and many others both inside and outside CTC, and urges that Fast Track be eliminated and replaced with a new model of trade authority to include transparency in trade negotiations, a Congressional role in selecting trade partners, a clear set of negotiating mandates and Congressional certification that mandates have been met before negotiations can conclude.

“Fast track is the wrong track for Americans who care about the health of our families and access to clean air, clean water, and land,” said Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club. “We need a new model of trade — one that protects communities and the environment while keeping the public engaged in the policymaking process.”

“We need 21st century trade authority that allows Congress to do its job and represent the interests of U.S. workers, consumers and communities.



OFTC board member Wes Brain, Robert Doell, President of Veterans for Peace, Chapter 156, Ron Sanderfer of Occupy Medford, Ivend Hollen with OFTC, David Meyers of SEIU Local 503 and Renee Sunni Sinjem of SOJWJ met with Senator Wyden reps to present signatures of Oregonians opposed to Fast Track. Photo by Jason Houk

By any name, the flawed ‘fast track’ approach still would enable negotiators to bypass Congress and put in place new and binding agreements that have real consequences for all of us,” said Larry Cohen, president of the Communication Workers of America.

The September 2014 letter follows petitions delivered on behalf of more than 5,000 Oregonians by the Oregon Fair Trade Campaign, SumofUs and others to Senator Wyden’s offices in Portland, Eugene and Medford earlier in the month. The Oregon petitions insisted that “Smart Track” not become Fast Track in disguise. To drive home the message, activists delivering them wore Groucho Marxstyle disguises.

Senator Wyden hasn’t publicly announced any details about his new “Smart Track” bill yet. The positive things he has said thus far include wanting to introduce greater transparency to the negotiating process and wanting to include stronger negotiating objectives. While both of these are critical elements of any true overhaul of the Fast Track system, they alone won’t be worth the paper they’re written on if the old, Nixonera Fast Track approval process is allowed to continue — a point the new letter makes clearly. “While it is important that Congress

develop negotiating mandates that outline what all U.S. trade agreements must and must not include ... even more important is the replacement of the outdated and failed Fast Track procedures,” the letter states.

“There is no ‘acceptable’ version of fast track,” said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen. “Fasttrack must be replaced so Congress can steer international trade in a new direction and create agreements that actually work for most Americans.”

Individuals and local organizations are urged to add their voices to the call for Senator Wyden to not bring Fast Track legislation forward during the Lame Duck session of Congress beginning in November, when defeated members still serving have fewer compunctions about voting against their own political interests.

Visit the website: www.stopfasttrack.com to see which organizations have already added their voices to the call against Fast Track, and to find out how you can join them. Local organizations wishing to add their logos and messages to this page can find a link near the bottom of the page. Contact Ivend Holen (5417795392) for details and further information on Fast Track or the TPP.

Fight

CONTINUED FROM 1

before, and workers at Home Forward (formerly the Housing Authority of Portland), who are members of AFSCME 3135 and Laborers 290.

The Fight for 15 is spreading on the West Coast. The first breakthrough came in November 2013 when a referendum victory made Sea-Tac, Wash., the first city in the country with a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. Unfortunately, a judge then ruled that the city didn’t have the authority to apply the new law to workers at the Sea-Tac International airport, which is by far the largest low-wage employer in town.

In June of this year, Seattle made national news by becoming the first major city to pass a \$15 minimum wage law, though business interests were able to sneak in loopholes that will keep some workers from reaching the new minimum for up to seven years. The Seattle law was the culmination of the “15 Now” campaign that coalesced around socialist Kshama Sawant’s successful bid for City Council the previous November. Momentum continued to grow over the summer, in Los Angeles first, when SEIU Local 99 won a \$15 an hour minimum wage for all school workers. Later, the City Council passed a law guaranteeing \$15 for all workers in the city’s large hotels. Both minimums will go into full effect within two years. Finally, on November 4, San Francisco voters approved a bill that will bring raise the city’s minimum wage to \$15 by 2018. Two years ago, when fast-food workers went on strike in New York for \$15 and a union, their demand seemed like a dream, a fantasy. Then, fast-food workers in Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis and city after city made the same demand. During a day of action and strikes in September, 150 cities saw fast-food strikes, with thousands of workers taking up the call for fifteen and a union. Hundreds got arrested in civil disobedience protests, and they were joined by home health care workers. Over the past few years, Walmart workers have also stood up for \$15 and a union, most recently with a sit-down strike in a Los Angeles store on November 13. Organizers with the OUR Walmart campaign expect this year’s Black Friday protests to be the largest yet, with demonstrations expected at 1,600 stores. On the same day as the sit-down in the Los Angeles Walmart, federal contract workers in Washington, D.C., staged a one-day strike outside of well-known government buildings, including the Capitol. The D.C. action, organized by the Good Jobs Nation campaign backed by SEIU, also called for 15 and a union.’



Jobs with Justice organizer Wes Brain leads protesters outside Wendy’s in Ashland last December, called for raising the minimum wage to \$15, arguing that workers could then pay the rent, get off food stamps, have disposable income and boost the local economy. Photo via Rogue Planet News



In Portland, a new group called 15 NOW PDX was formed this spring following the Seattle victory. Momentum has continued to build as 15 NOW PDX accumulates endorsements and resource pledges from many local and state unions, particularly from the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which organized much of the national fast food and home care actions. While Portland has seen little in the way of low-wage workers’ job actions, 15 NOW PDX has been reaching out to the working poor through street petitioning, with plans for workplace canvassing.

Portland activists can’t win a citywide rise in the minimum wage, as in San Francisco and Seattle, because of a state law “pre-empting” cities and counties from raising the minimum above the state level. So 15 NOW PDX has focused on pressuring the City Council to bump up city contract workers—including janitors, security guards, parking attendants, and stadium workers—to \$15.

Seeking to lift the state “pre-emption” and to bring 15 NOW statewide, the Portland group is backing two pieces of legislation: one to raise the state minimum wage to \$15 with a phase-in over two years for businesses with less than 10 employees, and another which would eliminate the pre-emption prohibiting localities from raising the minimum wage. Plans are in the works for a big rally on the Capitol steps January 24, followed by a statewide gathering of \$15 activists.

15 NOW chapters are springing up in Salem, Eugene, Medford, Beaverton, and The Dalles. Organizers are preparing to take \$15 to a statewide ballot initiative, if the effort at the state legislature is unsuccessful. More information can be found at www.15NOWpdx.org.

Jamie Partridge is a retired postal worker and steering committee member of 15 Now PDX.



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The other trade agreement

BY MICHAEL NIEMANN

For some time now, the US progressives and allied groups have mobilized against the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP). That campaign has focussed on the impact of trade liberalization on jobs, the elimination of non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that open the doors to undermining health and environmental standards, and the creation of extra-judicial dispute settlement mechanisms in investor-state disputes over the rules of the TPP.

Parallel to those negotiations, another trade agreement is being drafted in the same secrecy as the TPP, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact (TTIP). That agreement between the European Union (EU) and the USA mirrors the proposed TPP in most ways. It is therefore surprising that there has been virtually no news and no engagement with TTIP by progressives in the US.

The primary opposition to TTIP has come from European activists who have rallied both political parties (progressives and greens) and unions and many NGOs to voice their opposition to TTIP. The primary points of contention have been the secrecy with which the agreement has been negotiated, the proposed elimination of NTBs and the investor-state dispute settling mechanism. Opposition in Europe has in many ways mirrored the US opposition to TPP, except that the US is the primary target of the protests. Here are the contentious issues.

Secrecy. As has been the case in previous rounds of trade negotiations, the drafts to the agreement and even the negotiation mandate of the EU Commission have been secret. That mandate was finally declassified on October 9, 2014. Before that date, even the members of the European Parliament in charge of trade

relations had no access to the information. The negotiation texts are still classified.

Non-Tariff Barriers. European activists fear that the relaxation of non-tariff barriers proposed in TTIP will lead to an inundation of the continent with GMO foods, chlorine washed chicken and hormone beef from the US. That fear isn't necessarily overblown. Yes, there have been food scandals in Europe, but they were committed in violation of the law. Europeans worry about legal US food processing practices, such as washing chicken carcasses with chlorine water or using growth hormones to speed up the time to slaughter for beef cattle. TTIP could bring such practices to Europe where they are currently banned. Consumers are equally worried about the pervasiveness of GMO crops in US food production without any labeling and they fear that TTIP will undermine European efforts at regulation.

Trade in Services. Here, the concern lies primarily with unregulated financial services. Europeans rightly blame the lack governmental oversight in the US for the great recession of 2008. They fear that TTIP will make that practice standard throughout Europe. Many of the usurious practices in the US, like Payday lending, are either banned or strictly regulated in Europe.

Investor State Dispute Settlement. Activists on both sides of the Atlantic are on the same page on this issue. They don't like the idea that corporations can make an end run around properly enacted legislation at the local, regional and national level by taking their disputes to an unelected arbitration tribunal whose decisions are not subject to review.

Cultural Heritage. This is a particularly difficult issue. For Europeans, Hollywood

and the US entertainment industry in general are viewed as the 800 pound gorilla in the room. Many countries have a fledgling film industry that survive only through government subsidies. There are fears that TTIP would end those and open the cultural scene for an even larger onslaught of UN American media products. The French have already indicated that their domestic film industry will continue to receive government support financed by taxes on US American movies.

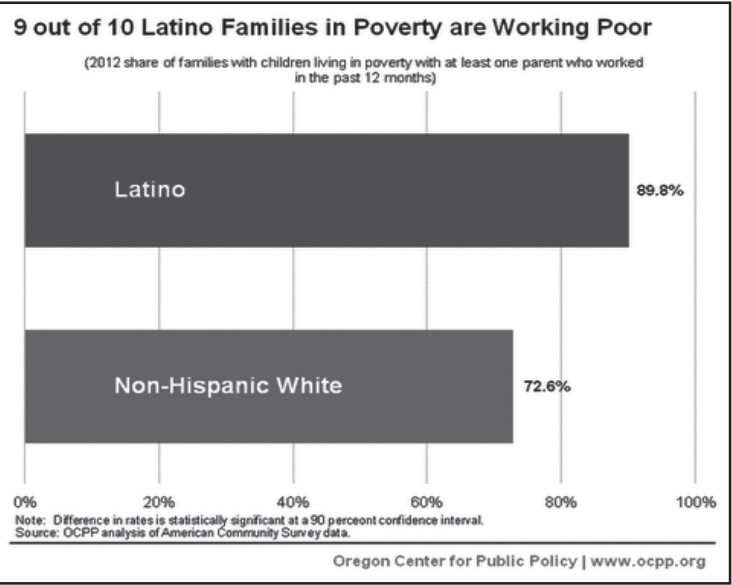
European unions have had a mixed stance on TTIP. The US is viewed as a low-wage competitor in the richer EU countries and the anti-union attitude of US corporation is considered particularly troublesome. At the same time, there is hope that TTIP will create more union jobs. For example, the auto industry hopes that TTIP will make crash and safety tests performed in the EU acceptable in the US and thus eliminate costly duplication. The lower cost would increase sales and create more jobs. Environmentalists on the other hand are opposed and worry that the EU Commission will trade away European safeguards in exchange for more better market access for VW or Fiat.

The strength of the opposition has surprised the EU Commission and the decision to publish its negotiation mandate is an indication that the protests have had a result. An increasing number of politicians of different political persuasion have also come out against TTIP. If US American activists were to take up TTIP with the same energy as they did the TPP, the end result may yet be a trade agreement that is in the interest of people rather than corporations.

Nearly all poor Latino families in Oregon are working

According to the Oregon Center for Public Policy, nine out of 10 poor Oregon Latino families with children had at least one parent in

the family who worked in the previous 12 months. By comparison, the figure was seven out of 10 for the state's poor non-Hispanic white families with children.



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Karen Jeffery’s Occupy the street

Our roving reporter was in France on a small island -

Isle St. Honorat, home for 16 centuries to Benedictine monks.

She interviewed monks and retreatants at the abbey.

Why are you here? What do you love? What would you change?



Frère Colomaban
Monk, Lérins Abbaye. Came here in 1990. Has been here since, except for 14 years at S’Enlenque Monastery, near Avignon. Speaks great English. Plays Keith Jarett at lunch. Blesses me.

A friend told me about the island and abbey, and I first visited in 1985. It took me five years to leave my life as a husband and father, teacher in Aix en Provence, and make the choice to be here. I stay for the same reason I came: liturgy, community, work/pray - the organization of daily life around service to God, nature, and this beautiful place. God is everywhere, but I think here we are a bit closer to Him. We are so spoiled here. We had better make the best of it.



Karen Jeffery is a writer, editor, photographer, activist, publicist and resource. Reach her at mauitutu@gmail.com or follow her blog at travelswithtutu.blogspot.com



Father Andrew Wadsworth
Sussex, England. 2nd retreat. 9 days. Invitation of a frere (Gianni - a novice) friend from Italy. Priest at St. Wilfred’s Bognor Registry for 8 years. Priest 26 years.

I come for the prayer, the silence, the rhythm of the prayer throughout the day. R&R is nice, but retreat is different from holiday. It’s important for perspective, to put God back into our busy lives. I love the history of this place - St. Patrick (Ireland), St. Augustin (Kent). To do pilgrimage in a holy place is wonderful.



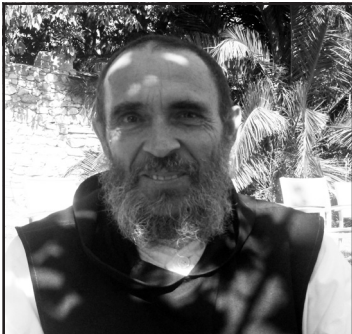
Jean Baptiste de Charentenay
Paris. 1st time, here 4 days. Manages a very nice retail store for men’s shoes

Here I feel the love of Jesus and can be patient in his love. I can be a brother to the brothers and the others. The place is magical - how good God is! To feel the generosity of God our Father, who gave us all of this, gives so much to the billions on this planet. To meet others in that place of humility and love, others who share our belief in God...to melt in the arms of God, staying close to his heart. I would love even more silence at this sanctuary, but to hear His voice, to hear his truth. Spiritus Sanctus.



Frère Marie
Winemaker and Youth Development. Monk here 27 years, former electrician and pastor from the Alps (Guillaume, in the national park)

Like most, I was called to a life of prayer and work here, to give my life to Christ. I found the monastic life because a Dominican Father told me about it here, and I thought engagement would be a challenge. I stay because it’s my life. I would like to bring more young people to the pastoral life and to develop more agritourism here on the island.



Frère Gilles
Monk, Lérins Abbey, since 1973. Came as a noviate with 3 brothers and 3 sisters of Bethlehem back when sisters lived on the island too. works mostly with the guesthouse and teaching theology to noviates

I came here from Lyon as a calling forty years ago with two other monks and some sisters, who told us about the island. I ordained as a priest in 1981 and studied in Rome for three years. I stay here by rational and providential choice. Because this monastery is a bridge of occidental and oriental monasticism of Cistercian monks, of which St. Honorat was the model, coming from Egypt, Greece, Italy. We are a brotherhood, a community. The life is prayer and work; we are not closed, but open to the world, to let God work in the heart and in the hearts of others.

Judge sides with Occupy Eugene: 1st Amendment does not go to sleep at 5 p.m

VIA RT.COM

A federal judge ruled that the General Services Administration (GSA) wrongly infringed on the First Amendment rights of Occupy Eugene protesters by severely restricting the hours and days they were allowed to demonstrate.

The group, an offshoot of the Occupy Wall Street movement, sued the GSA for denying a permit so its members could protest in a public plaza in Eugene, Oregon in 2012. The members believed that the reason their application was denied was that the government had targeted Occupy Eugene for its messages concerning financial fairness, homelessness and demands for corporate accountability.

On Wednesday, US District Judge Michael McShane issued a summary judgment in favor of the movement, but denied that they were targeted.

“The First Amendment does not go to sleep at 5 p.m. on Friday afternoon and wake up at 8 a.m. on Monday morning,” McShane wrote in his decision. “Although GSA may generally use a permitting scheme to oversee access to the Plaza, GSA’s permitting process, given the facts present in this action, was not narrowly tailored to serve any significant government interest, and was therefore unconstitutional as applied to plaintiffs.”

In May 2012, Occupy Eugene (OE) received a 60-day permit for continuous, non-exclusive use of the plaza area outside the Eugene Federal Building from the local GSA office. They chose the plaza becauseit “has always been a lawful place for demonstrat[ors] and picketers to congregate” that is “located on a highly-visible, busy street corner [and] is adjacent to courthouses, federal, state and municipal political offices,” court documents said.

The Wayne L. Morse U.S. Courthouse in Eugene, Oregon overlooks the plaza where Occupy Eugene protested. (Reuters/Richard Clement) But when OE tried to renew the permit in July 2012, GSA regional director Wayne Benjamin informed the group that, “due to problems with other Occupy groups,” there were new restrictions on the use of the plaza. Instead of a 60-day permit, OE would only be able to receive a 30-day one. They would also only be allowed to protest during the property hours, which were listed as between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays. A

sign in the plaza lists the hours of operation for the area as being between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. OE applied for a renewal, but changed the hours to 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. The group also informed the GSA that it disagreed with the restrictions and planned to remain at the plaza without a permit.

Benjamin denied the application, and listed the primary reason for denial was that OE sought “to maintain a presence in the plaza 24 hours a day for a period of 30 days,” court documents said. The group appealed the decision, but were again turned down.

OE decided to continue to protest, even without a permit to do so. In mid July, Federal Protective Services (FPS) Area Commander Michael Foster and FPS Officer Thomas Keedy informed the group they needed to leave the plaza or face arrest. All but one member, Florence Semple, left the area. Semple told the two men she believed the eviction was unconstitutional, and would only leave upon receiving a citation or being arrested. She was charged, but the charges were later dropped over her objection.

The group filed the lawsuit in December 2012, after the government again refused to let OE protest in the plaza without the restricted, 30-day permit. In issuing his summary judgment, McShane found that the time restrictions had a “chilling effect” on those wishing to exercise their right to free speech. “GSA’s argument that the ordinance was narrowly tailored to support government interests is not supported by the record,” he wrote. “Though public safety, aesthetics, and public use are legitimate government interests, the hours regulations listed in OE’s second permit application were so tightly restricted that they created an impermissible restriction on OE’s First Amendment rights.”

The judge also chastised the GSA for suddenly restricting the hours on the permit without a federally required comment period. He also added, however, that there was “no nefarious intent” on the part of the government or any of the individual defendants, noting that it was a “unique situation in which the defendants were forced to deal with new problems presented by [OE’s] unique form of protest.”

Military defense contractors are making a killing

BY DAN FROOMKIN
FOR THE INTERCEPTOR

Stock prices for Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, Raytheon and Northrop Grumman set all-time record highs last week as it became increasingly clear that President Obama was committed to a massive, sustained air war in Iraq and Syria. It's nothing short of a windfall for these and other huge defense contractors, who've been getting itchy about federal budget pressures that threatened to slow the rate of increase in military spending. Now, with U.S. forces literally blowing through tens of millions of dollars of munitions a day, the industry is not just counting on vast spending to replenish inventory, but hoping for a new era of reliance on supremely expensive military hardware. "To the extent we can shift away from relying on troops and rely more heavily on equipment — that could present an opportunity," Jack Ablin, chief investment officer at BMO Private Bank, whose \$66 billion portfolio includes Northrop Grumman Corp. and Boeing Co. shares, told Bloomberg. Defense contractor stocks have far exceeded the performance of the broader market. A Bloomberg index of four of the largest Pentagon contractors rose 19 percent this year, compared to 2.2 percent for the S&P 500. It's the munition makers who "stand to reap the biggest windfall, especially in the short term," says Fortune magazine, citing Raytheon's long-range Tomahawk missiles, and Lockheed Martin's Hellfires, among others. "Small diameter bombs could be a huge winner, since aircraft can carry more of them in a single sortie," one analyst tells the magazine. U.S. forces used 47 Tomahawk

missiles on Monday alone, at \$1.5 million apiece.

Smart "small-diameter bombs" cost about \$250,000 each. Richard Clough writes for Bloomberg: *For defense companies, the offensive against Islamic State and al-Qaeda extremists is more than a showcase for big-ticket weapons such as Lockheed's F-22 Raptor fighter, the stealth jet that debuted in combat this week. In its first night of airstrikes into Syria, the U.S. dropped about 200 munitions and launched 47 Raytheon-made Tomahawk cruise missiles, according to U.S. Central Command. The military also deployed Boeing's GBU-32 Joint Direct Attack Munitions and Hellfire missiles from Bethesda, Maryland-based Lockheed, creating an opening for restocking U.S. arsenals.*

Tory Newmyer's article in Fortune does a great job of depicting the new giddiness in the defense industry: New fights mean new stuff, after all. And following the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan—and the belt-tightening at the Pentagon imposed by steep budget cuts—military suppliers are lining up to meet a suddenly restored need for their wares. ... [D]efense analysts are pointing to a pair of sure-bet paydays from the new campaign: for those making and maintaining the aircraft, manned and unmanned, that will swarm the skies over the region, and for those producing the missiles and munitions that will arm them.

"The drone builders are going to have a field day," says Dov Zakheim, who served as Pentagon Comptroller during the George W. Bush administration. ...

Indeed, the widening conflict could even reverse the trend of tapering investments in the technology, says Mark Gunzinger, a retired Air Force

colonel and former deputy assistant secretary of defense now at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. "One of the things that can help a new capability break through is an operational stressor, like a major air campaign," he says. ...

In the longer run, one defense appropriations lobbyist predicts—a hopeful note in his voice: "we're going to have to bust through the budget caps" imposed on the military by the sequester cuts. "We can't fight this on the cheap," he says.

Zacks Investment Research urges investors to buy Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics and Northrop Grumman: *It is likely that the conflict with ISIS will continue for a while. Such a campaign is likely to provide impetus for defense stocks in the days and weeks ahead. These stocks would make excellent additions to your portfolio.*

The Pentagon recently estimated that military operations in Iraq were costing an average of \$7.5 million a day between June and last week — an annual rate of about \$2.7 billion. But even if costs ballooned to, say, \$15 billion a year, the figure would still be dwarfed by the approximately \$1.3 billion a week we're still spending in Afghanistan.

And for now, there's no cash flow problem: Obama can just dip into the "Overseas Contingency Operations" budget, the \$85 billion "all-purpose war funding credit card" Congress just gave him – \$26 billion more than he had even asked for.

Walmart

CONTINUED FROM 1

arrested 23 people outside a Los Angeles-area Walmart protesting the company's low wages and treatment of workers who advocate for better working conditions.

In southern Oregon, Walmart workers from the Klamath Falls store will be participating in a three-day strike. There will be a public rally at the Klamath Falls Walmart, 3600 Washburn Way on Wednesday Nov. 19 from 9 am to noon. Following the rally there will be a press conference with the workers. On Thursday, Nov. 20 the workers will be in Medford at the Walmart Supercenter at 1360 Center Drive from 10-12 PM. They will be joined by community supporters from Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice and local unions. The workers will travel to Portland on Friday to join in actions there.

KSKQ Community Radio will be broadcasting from the action on Wednesday from 9 - 10 AM. Listen live at www.kskq.org. For more information on the local Walmart actions visit www.sojwj.org.

When recording police, know your rights

A man was arrested by a Klamath County sheriff's deputy who claimed it was illegal to record him. A Youtube video shows a deputy approach the man after having pulled over the man's girlfriend. The man had been recording the traffic stop from a considerable distance.

Here is the exchange that took place:
Deputy: What's your name?
Citizen: That's not relevant at all.
Deputy: Is that recording me right now?
Citizen: Yeah.
Deputy: Put your hands behind your back.
Citizen: Um, for what
Deputy: It's a crime to record me
Citizen: No, it's not, in Oregon ...
Deputy: Turn around now
Citizen: If only one party knows that it is being recorded, then that is all that matters.

It is not clear from the Youtube description what the man was charged with. Oregon law permit individuals to record police officers as they have no expectation of privacy in public. You can view the video at: <http://tinyurl.com/ozz4spl>
Although the Ashland Police do not have an official policy regarding individuals recording officers performing their duties, Police Chief Holderness tells RVCP that "this happens quite

often in Ashland and we do not have any problem with people recording our contacts in public places as long as they do it in a way that does not interfere with what the officer is doing."

We do occasionally have to warn people," explains Holderness in an email to RVCP, "especially when officers are making arrests, that they need to stay far enough away so they are not interfering or putting the officer in danger."

Chief Holderness reminds readers that Oregon law requires that if you are audio recording people having a private conversation you need to make the parties to that conversation aware you are recording them. While this does not apply to officers making arrests or doing many things in the course of their duties in a public place, it can apply in some circumstances.

According to chief Holderness, "The majority of our contacts with the public are audio and video recorded by us and baring some emergency situation or when specifically allowed by law for certain types of investigations we always advise the person or persons involved that they are being recorded. Those recordings are a public record unless they become evidence in a criminal case in which case they do not become a public record until the case is adjudicated. "

Shop

CONTINUED FROM 1

of the way in the department store aisle, we can shop small; mom and pop stores, craft fairs, antique malls and keep our money local; shop stores that are unionized or otherwise treat their workers well and find something else to do on Black, ***ahem buy nothing*** Friday. (Full disclosure: I have every intention of spending about ten bucks or so on Puck's Doughnuts after the Festival of Lights parade that day as that is a Houk tradition. That is all.) Or really thinking dangerous here, we could go rogue and buy less of everything and spend more of our time with one another.

That might be just the thing needed to be able to see those little twinkly lights burning bright once again, beautiful, true and clear.
Major retail stores that are closed on Thanksgiving Do they help you shop your values? THANK THEM WITH YOUR DOLLARS:

- Costco
TJ Maxx
Ace Hardware
Barnes & Noble
GameStop
REI
Lowes
Petco

WHY WE OCCUPY

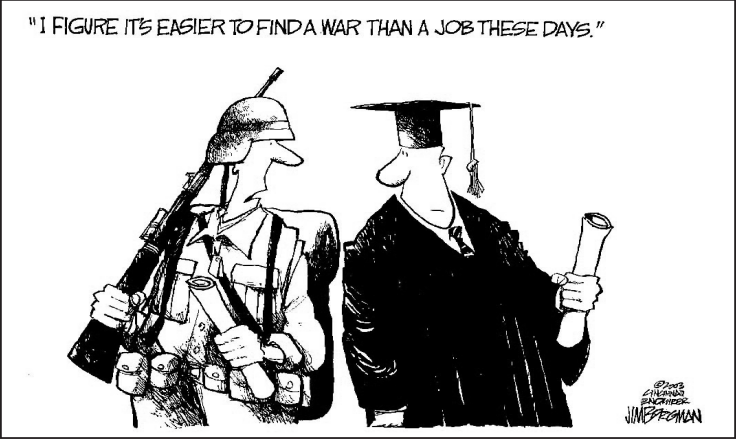
There are no excuses left. Either you join the revolt...or you stand on the wrong side of history. either you obstruct in the only form left to us - which is civil disobedience - the plundering by the criminal class on Wall Street and the accelerated destruction of the ecosystem...or become the passive enabler of a monstrous evil. CHRIS HEDGES

TAKE ACTION

November 20 7:00 PM
Medford City Council Chambers
to urge the Mayor to join
the worldwide peace movement
MAYORS FOR PEACE
Learn more at occupymedford.com

"There is nothing except a tragic death wish to prevent us from reordering our priorities so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war."
Martin Luther King

Occupy Medford
meets every Saturday at 10:00 AM
at the Medford Public Library



Ted
CONTINUED FROM 1

General Westmoreland, head of the entire Southeast-Asian operations. (The two had interacted previously during a military incident.) Seeing Ted on foot, the General demanded to know why he was out of uniform. Once he heard Ted’s explanation, Westmoreland became infuriated, and immediately insisted upon driving Ted back to the hospital. He chewed out the staff for sending Ted off without proper gear, then personally transported Ted back to his unit.

For the last month of Ted’s tour he was assigned to light duty; in January 1966 he was discharged. Not yet fully aware of any lasting injuries, Ted did not go on record discussing his physical complaints at that time — a fact that would return to complicate his life in the future.

For the next twenty-five years Ted served the Rogue Valley community in a variety of capacities: factory worker, logger, mechanic, fire-fighter, school custodian—to name a few. Sometimes these physically dangerous occupations came with health insurance, while others did not. In several cases, Ted received work-related incapacitating injuries, forcing him off the job.

Ted suffered continuous bouts of back and neck pain, for which he consulted a string of chiropractors. Their treatments provided him with only temporary relief, and no proper diagnosis of his condition. Ted simply braved the pain, while not relating any of his symptoms to his years of military service. Thinking his pain to be the result of his recent injuries, he never considered turning to the Veteran’s Administration for assistance.

It was not until the early 1990’s, that a chiropractor suggested some of Ted’s symptoms might be due to nerve damage from exposure to Agent Orange from his time in Vietnam. (Agent Orange, a petrochemical defoliant, was sprayed over large areas of jungle during the Vietnam War in order to remove underbrush in which enemy guerrillas might conceal themselves. Within a couple years after the end of the war, the US military determined that exposure to the chemicals caused nerve damage, birth defects, and cancer. Lawsuits and toxic land clean up continue to this day.)

Just as Ted was coming to terms with the possibility his recurrent pain might be related to his active duty, a final work-related accident rendered him permanently disabled.

Carrying a refrigerator down a set of stairs, his partner slipped, and the heavy appliance pushed Ted backwards down 20 stairs. His neck was

broken. Amazingly, Ted was not permanently paralyzed. However, the injury set him up for another cycle of misdiagnosis and improper treatments. In the process Ted lost his job and his health insurance. Desperate, Ted was forced to turn to the VA for assistance.

Since the mid-1990’s, Ted has suffered insult upon injury attempting, like so many other veterans, to obtain proper care from the Veterans’ Administration for medical conditions—both military-related and otherwise. Whistle-blower, Dr. Samuel Foote, recently brought the public’s attention to the appointment delay scams, primarily in the Arizona VA system (where Ted sought assistance in the winter months.) Additionally, both in Arizona and Oregon he was at times flagrantly over-medicated or alternately denied pain medications altogether. After one appointment in White City, during which Ted was told to down a dose of each of three different powerful pain medications before leaving, Ted was subsequently stopped by the police for DUI, and stripped of his driver’s license for a year.

Disturbingly, Ted has not been able to obtain much of the

needed care or support that he deserves. Critical medical records from his time in the service are missing—presumed to be buried somewhere deep in inaccessible storage files. Without proper paperwork, Ted has only been recognized for a 20% disability claim (based upon the one documented injury from basic training.)

Scheduling of appointments for consults and procedures has been arbitrary and without consideration of inconvenience to the patient. In one particularly galling incident, while Ted and Bobbie were wintering in Arizona, the Portland VA called to inform Ted that he had been scheduled for an operation. After driving the entire, three-state distance, Ted was subjected to hours of consults, only to be unapologetically informed that, because he still had partial mobility, the doctors had decided not to operate after all.

In anger, Ted gave up on the Veteran’s Administration. Then, upon the advice of friends, Ted sought help from the small satellite office for the Jackson County VA located in Medford. With proper assistance, Ted was finally able to negotiate the system a bit more effectively. The clerical

workers there sent him to a more sympathetic doctor, who finally took his complaints seriously. He received x-rays, which revealed evidence of several broken vertebrae in his neck—old breaks that has subsequently fused on their own. These could have been the result of the rifle butt accident during Basic Training, the truck explosion in Vietnam, and/or Ted’s tumble down the foxhole.

Even so, without full documentation of the incidents, Ted continues to have difficulty raising his status from 20% to full disability payments. He was informed that signed affidavits of witnesses to the accidents he suffered during the war would help. In an effort to locate witnesses, Ted and Bobbie attended a reunion of his platoon. He recognized only one person he knew from Vietnam—not someone who could support his claims. Ted assumes that most of the men with whom he served did not survive their tour of duty.

“I was really close to those guys. They were like family.” Ted’s eyes well up, and a tear rolls down his cheek. “Bobbie and I visited the traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall when it was in Arizona a couple of

years ago. I located the name of one person from my unit. Then I couldn’t take it anymore, and had to turn away.” His voice trails off as he continues, “while I was working for the school district I met one teacher who had also served in Nam. He was so traumatized he couldn’t talk to his class about the war. He hoped that I might be able to do so, but I couldn’t either. Eventually we both sat down, and talked about our experiences. That helped a bit... He got a brain tumor from exposure to Agent Orange. I heard he died a couple of years ago.” Ted unabashedly pulls out a red bandana from his jeans pocket to wipe the tears away.

I am so proud of Ted. He has arrived at a point of self-confidence, knowing that real men—real heroes such as he—are allowed to cry.

Rogue Valley Veterans for Peace Chapter 156 meets monthly in members homes and welcomes new folks. For more information visit their website at www.rv-vfp156.org

The price of learning
The cost of educational books has soared by 150 percent since 2000 while the cost of recreational books has fallen.

VIA MYBUDGET360

There are many reasons why college costs are soaring even well beyond the regular rate of inflation. Schools are adding immense amenities to attract students. Student debt backed by the government allows schools to push prices higher since students simply go into deeper debt with little analysis on ability to pay at a later date. Similar to hospital charging outrageous prices for a standard Aspirin, book publishers realize that they can get away with charging more for textbooks as well. Any college student can tell you that the cost of a college text can eat deep into your budget. Many science books cost hundreds of dollars. Publishers quickly realized years ago that savvy students could photocopy and pass books around. The way around this? Requiring students to purchase access codes in conjunction with the book virtually forced students to always pay market prices for access to course content. So it should come as no surprise to you that since 2000, the cost of educational books has soared while the cost of recreational books has actually fallen.

Reading inflation
College books are expensive. Yet the cost of going to college has absolutely soared since 2000. In line with the rising cost of

higher education students have gone deeper and deeper into debt. Financial aid will first pay off tuition, fees, and other mandatory charges but many students will take a small or large amount more to cover living expenses including books and other materials. Since the debt is there, it is not surprising that publishers have taken advantage of this easy debt machinery.

Many college students are living on Ramen and water yet somehow, are able to drop hundreds of dollars on course books. I would venture to say that a piece of that student debt pie is allocated to purchase books each semester. If you think prices have not gone up for educational books take a look at this:

Educational books, those largely used for college have gone up by 150+ percent since 2000. Keep in mind that over this period wages have gone stagnant. So maybe the cost of all books has soared. Not true. The cost of recreational books has fallen. After all, digital publishing should be driving the cost lower along with lower barriers of entry for aspiring writers.

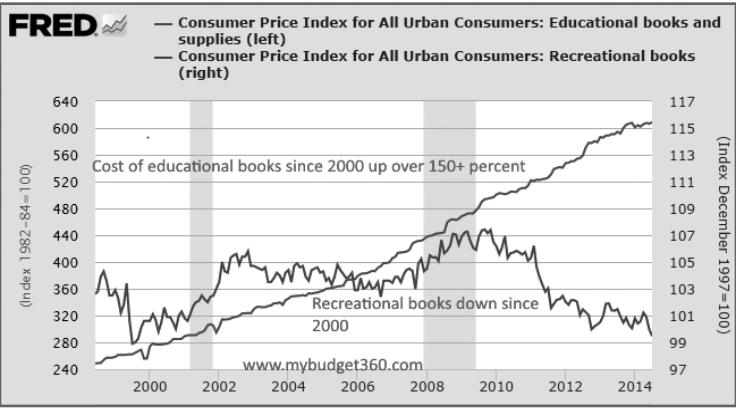
But with course content, many instructors will use publisher materials as part of their course thus forcing students to purchase access codes to complete

required assignments. The book then becomes a secondary focus for many students.

There is no question that many college texts are excellent and provide great material. Yet it is interesting that the cost of educational books has moved up in tandem with the cost of higher education. I attribute this to the massive amounts of student debt financing flowing into the system. The US has a massive college system and with \$1.2 trillion

calculus course. Not much has changed in entry level college calculus. Yet publishers come out with new editions every year. Why? Like any business, you have to figure out ways to keep income streaming in.

It is fascinating that the inflation in higher education is permeating into ancillary items including college books. Some things never change and college books seem to be a very expensive component of the



in student debt outstanding, money has been flowing into a large portion of our economy. Publishers have been one of the main winners here. If a course is taught with publisher material requiring a code, there is a near monopoly for that publisher. Take for example a college level

Rally at the Capitol for Health Care - Feb. 11

BY JASON HOUK

Mark your calendars : February 11, 2015 is a red letter day for health care reform in Oregon. Supporters for Health Care for All-Oregon (HCAO) are traveling from all corners of the state to attend a rally on the Oregon Capitol steps to demonstrate the breadth and depth of support for the cause of universal health care. Organizers of the 2015 Capitol Steps Rally expect thousands to attend the event. In Southern Oregon, local organizers have pledged to mobilize 200+ folks to carpool and travel by chartered buses. According to organizers, “we expect 2,500 people carrying signs and banners while they listen to a program of great music and inspiring speakers.”

During the rally, folks will get the opportunity to visit their legislators to call on their support for the Health Care for All Oregon Plan. HCAO also supports an extension and funding for HB 3260, passed in 2013, that authorized a study of options for financing universal health care in Oregon. HCAO is a grassroots coalition of over 100 organizations that are determined to create a better way of financing health care for every person who lives or works in Oregon. HCAO recognizes health care to be a human right. We seek to create a health care system based on the principles of Universality, Equity, Accountability, Transparency Participation, and health care as a Public Good. For more information visit www.hcao.org.



Over a thousand supporters of universal health care rally in Salem at the start of the 2013 legislative session. Organizers expect over 2000 at the rally in February 2015. Photo via HCAO

Everybody in and nobody out!

Why?

Because we believe health care is a basic human right!

Register today for the HCAO Feb 11th Rally at www.HcaoRally.net

For local carpool information contact Health Care for All Oregon- Rogue Valley www.hcao-rv.org

USPS cuts threaten jobs and services

Thousands of postal workers and unions that represent them took to the streets in front of post offices across the nation this month to protest major cut backs in mail processing services. Medford was no exception. Off-duty & retired letter carriers & postal workers were joined by social justice activists from Southern Oregon Jobs with Justice in front of the Medford Post Office. “The Postal Service is set to make severe cuts in mail delivery service that, if implemented, would cause hardships for customers, drive away business, and

cause incalculable harm to its reputation,” National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando said. This January, USPS plans to close or consolidate operations at 82 mail processing and distribution centers throughout the country, including Eugene/Springfield, Bend & Pendleton. Such a move would practically eliminate overnight mail delivery—even from one address to another within the same city or town. On Jan. 5, 2015 the USPS is slated to lower “service standards” to virtually eliminate overnight delivery – including first-class mail

from one address to another within the same city or town. All mail (medicine, online purchases, local newspapers, newsletters of religious organizations, bill payments, letters and invitations) throughout the country would be delayed. Entire communities would lose business opportunities associated with e commerce, which relies on the speedy delivery of goods ordered online. The Bend, Eugene And Pendleton facilities are 3 of 82 Mail Processing & Distribution Centers scheduled to close. Veterans will be particularly hard hit — Veterans get their prescription drugs in the mail. Veterans get preference in hiring at the USPS (25% of postal workers are vets). Veterans will lose service, jobs & job opportunities. Organizers are encouraging folks to tell the Postmaster General and Board of Governors: Stop Delaying America’s Mail! “This plan would sacrifice service while failing to address the real causes of the Postal Service’s financial problems,” Rolando said. The agency’s reported “losses” actually are the result of a 2006 congressional mandate that forces it to set aside each year billions of dollars—money that’s raised solely by the sale of stamps and postal products, not taxes—to pre-fund the health benefits of future retirees. No other government agency or private enterprise is required to pre-fund such benefits at all. In 2014, the USPS has earned more than \$1 billion in profit from operations.



Kristi Wright and Alex Budd showed their support for a strong Postal Service. Photo by Allen Halmark

Our collective experience tells us wars are easy to start and hard to stop and that those hurt are often the innocent. As veterans, we draw on our personal experiences and perspectives to raise public awareness of the true costs and consequences of militarism and war - and to seek peaceful, effective alternatives. Our members have served our country in all branches of the military. We hold meetings the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM - details at our website: <http://rv-vfp156.org/>

We participate in local peace stands in public places, hold rallies, and march in the Grants Pass Boatnik and Ashland Fourth of July parades. Our local organization was formed in 2008 and serves Jackson and Josephine Counties in southern Oregon. We regularly join forces with other peace and social justice groups throughout the Rogue Valley and the country.

The national Veterans for Peace organization was formed in 1985, maintains offices in St. Louis, Missouri, and is opposed to all wars.

We are a non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)3 educational organization. For more information contact our president, Allen Hallmark, at hallmark3843@gmail.com.

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SOCAN hosting film on Salmon restoration

Salmon are probably the most well-known icons of the Pacific Northwest. They are beloved and respected for their recreational value and commercial value, and their cultural importance to Native Americans. When salmon are lost from our rivers and streams, efforts to stimulate their return garner tremendous public support.

The award-winning hour long film portraying efforts by the Winnemem Winto tribe to reintroduce salmon to the McCloud River in Northern California will be shown at the next meeting of Southern Oregon Climate Action Now. The meeting scheduled for November 25th at 6:00 pm in Medford Public Library is free and open to the public. In addition to the film, Jakob Shockey, Riparian Program Manager, Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council, will discuss climate change impacts on long term salmon population viability.

In the 1880s salmon from the McCloud River were shipped to New Zealand, South America, and Europe. Opening of the Shasta Dam in 1945 blocked the migratory pathway of the fish. Before that construction, this river was one of the most productive salmon and steelhead waterways in the Sacramento watershed. Salmon are critical to the lives and culture of the Winnemem Winto. Finding that the New Zealand salmon were the closest relatives to the extinct McCloud salmon, the Winnemem Winto set about reintroducing these salmon to their native waters. Dancing Salmon Home chronicles this adventure.

“By offering this program” SOCAN Co-facilitator Kathy Conway said “we hope to demonstrate how inspiring efforts by Native Americans to reintroduce salmon and recapture their traditional culture can be threatened.”

For more information visit www.socan.info.

27th annual Worlds AIDS Day candlelight observance

All are invited to participate in this interdenominational ceremony of remembrance, dedication and music. This global event is presented locally by several agencies, religious and community groups, performers and people living with HIV Disease under the auspices of UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS. The evening will pay tribute to our neighbors who have died of AIDS, celebrate the lives of those living with HIV/AIDS and inspire us to continue our commitment to the struggle against this disease. The evening of inspired performance and song culminates in a moving candlelight ceremony.

Monday, December 1, 2014 : 7:00 PM, Program Begins Medford Congregational Church, 1801 East Jackson, Medford

For more information contact William Coyne at 541-772-1777 or 541-944-9593

Public seed forum

The public is invited to a discussion of the future of seeds in our region and creation of action plans to protect them November 24th 7:00 to 9:00 pm Hosted by Chamber of Commons at Bellview Grange 1050 Tolman Creek Rd, Ashland Community Potluck Dinner begins at 6 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Uncle Foods Diner at the Methodist Church, Ashland. Tuesdays, 3 - 6:30 p.m.

Cooks, servers and clean up help needed.

Contact info@peacehouse.net

What should Oregon do with the carbon revenue? KOBI-TV public forum

There will be a free, interactive public forum that explores the question, what should Oregon do with the carbon revenue?

Sunday, December 7th @ 1:00-3:00pm - KOBI-TV Studio C, Medford

Climate change is hurting Oregonians. Pollution affects our health, economy, and infrastructure. Out-of-state corporations profit from dirty energy and leave us with the bill. The simplest way to hold them accountable and create energy choices is to put a price on carbon. This common-sense policy is essential for healthy communities, a clean energy economy, and a stable climate. Dozens of countries have adopted the solution, and it's supported by the overwhelming majority of economists across the political spectrum. A well-designed carbon price has the power to make our constant battles over subsidies and regulations redundant.

But if Oregon charges a fee to pollute, who should get the revenue? An effective fee could bring \$2 billion of revenue to our state every year. How would

you spend \$2 billion? Should we invest in education? Cut taxes? Repair infrastructure? Should we return the revenue back to Oregonians as a “Kicker”? Or put it away for a rainy day? Or do we give subsidies to clean energy projects?

Explore and share ideas at the forum:

- * What is carbon pricing policy?
- * Could Oregon pass a fee on carbon in 2015?
- * What should we do with the anticipated \$2B in revenue--every year?

Experts include Dr. Charles Maples, President of Oregon Tech (Moderator), Ian Adams, R Street Institue, Maud Powell, OSU Small Farms Extension, Dan Golden, Chemical Engineer & Oregon Climate Policy Director, Social justice advocates and more.

Discuss the risks and opportunities our state will navigate as it considers a carbon pricing policy in the 2015 legislative session. Connect with leaders in business, healthcare, science, food and energy. Shape the conversation!

Jackson County Library District seeks candidates for budget committee

The Jackson County Library District is seeking candidates to serve on its Budget Committee. Applications are available at any library or at www.jacksoncountylibrarydistrict.org. Up to 5 (five) candidates will be selected. Because this is the first Budget Committee of the Library District, terms will be from one (1) to three (3) years. Candidates should have experience in creating budgets and the ability to understand financial statements. Knowledge of financial policy and procedures for non-profits and special districts is desired. The candidates should have the time to dedicate to this professional volunteer opportunity, which would involve attendance at regular meetings over a three to four month period and occasional special projects

An application form for the Committee is available on the Library District web site at jacksoncountylibrarydistrict.org. Paper copies are available at all library branches. Applications will be accepted until December 19, 2014.


Please call District Board Member Maureen Swift at 541-864-9242 for further information.



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